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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 001157

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DEPARTMENT FOR D, AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: DENG ALOR: NCP-SPLM AT LOGGERHEADS ON ABYEI, SAF
REDEPLOYMENT

REF: A. KHARTOUM 00984

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 01150

Classified By: CDA Alberto Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (U) This cable has an action request (see para. 11).

[1](#)2. (C) The SPLM and the NCP have reached an impasse on the status of Abyei and the redeployment of the Sudanese Armed Forces from Southern Sudan, Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor told CDA Fernandez. Following senior-level internal consultations, the SPLM was considering three options for resolving Abyei: Recognizing the present administration, proposing UN administration through 2011, or calling for an IGAD summit on the issue--all of which the NCP would oppose. The SPLM had also considered requesting a UN force to maintain security in the oil areas of Upper Nile and Unity States to facilitate a SAF withdrawal. First Vice President Salva Kiir planned to discuss Abyei and the delayed SAF redeployment with President Bashir on July 25. CDA Fernandez said that the NCP was "playing a dangerous game" by obstructing positive action on implementation of the CPA and resolution of the Darfur conflict. End summary.

NCP-SPLM Impasse on Abyei

[1](#)3. (C) Meeting with CDA Fernandez on July 25, a somber Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor said that the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP) were at loggerheads over two issue critical to implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA): the status of Abyei and the redeployment of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) from Southern Sudan. Alor said that the SPLM-NCP discussions on Abyei had deteriorated since his last meeting with the CDA in June (Ref. A). While he and Vice President Ali Osman Taha had agreed that the key issue was oil, Taha had since rejected the SPLM proposal to share oil revenues between the North and South. After Alor's objections, Taha had then suggested that the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) could assume control of Abyei up to the "blue line" if it dropped demands to include Abyei in the referendum scheduled for 2011. "This is not possible," said Alor. Alor felt that Taha on his own would come to a compromise on Abyei but is constrained by hardliners who want to drag the process out.

SPLM Game Plan

¶4. (C) Following the break-down in talks on Abyei, the SPLM senior leadership, including First Vice President Salva Kiir, convened in Juba the week of July 16 to chart next steps. They concluded that the SPLM had three options: 1) The GoSS could recognize the present Abyei administration and deploy a police force North of Abyei, while recognizing this risked a direct confrontation with the NCP and the two SAF battalions in the area; 2) The GoSS could ask the UN to take over administration of Abyei according to the Abyei Border Commission (ABC) report and to administer the area until the 2011 referendum; or 3) The GoSS could contact the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the IGAD partners involved in the CPA negotiations and ask for a summit on the issue. Irrespective of the future course, Alor requested continued USG involvement in the issue given its role in negotiating the Abyei Protocol.

¶5. (C) CDA Fernandez said that the U.S. would use any opportunity to push the issue forward and would continue to exert pressure on the NCP to resolve the Abyei dispute. He noted that both Special Envoy Natsios' July 13 press conference and the Embassy's July 18 statement cited the slowness in CPA implementation. We did not want the Darfur conflict to overshadow serious impediments to CPA implementation, and the NCP needs to understand that we are looking for implementation by the Sudanese Government on Darfur and the CPA.

¶6. (C) Kiir planned to meet Bashir in Khartoum on July 25 to discuss the impasse. The SPLM would then decide on its

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course of action. CDA Fernandez noted that the NCP was opposed to an IGAD summit. He said that it appeared that the NCP did not want a solution to Abyei and preferred to prolong the negotiations. Alor concurred and said that the Kenyan government had also told him during a recent visit to Nairobi that President Bashir objected to a summit. According to Alor, Taha has been ready for a solution but then Presidential Assistant Nafie Ali Nafie "had turned up." Nafie, and others in the NCP, thought they could gain more concessions from the SPLM if they "dragged out" the discussions. Alor believed that "there is no substitute yet to keep negotiating with the NCP."

SPLM May Lose Control

¶7. (C) "The situation may go out of our hands," said Alor. Senior Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) officers from Abyei had begun resigning their commissions and returning to Abyei. Alor said that they had complained that they had not fought in the civil war for over 20 years to be denied the legitimate right of administration and lamented that people in the area had been without basic services for over three years. They predicted that the NCP will address SPLM concerns if they stop the flow of oil. In recent discussions with these officers, Alor and Kiir had tried to calm tensions. "Salva told them that we've not yet exhausted our discussions with the National Congress and that the SPLM could not be the first to violate the CPA."

Possible Explosion on SAF Redeployment

¶8. (C) Alor characterized the SAF's delay in redeploying its forces from Southern to Northern Sudan as "explosive." Rather than withdrawing its forces, Alor claimed that the SAF had reinforced its troops in Upper Nile and Unity States from

July 7-9. Some SPLA forces had almost had skirmishes with the SAF in these areas, and Alor had told Kiir that he should issue orders to the SPLA troops to "restrain themselves." The NCP was delaying the formation of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) in the oil areas as a pretext for a continued SAF presence. The SPLM was considering asking the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to assume control of the oil areas on the border as a means to defuse the situation, although they doubted this is a viable solution.

Alor Dodges Darfur "Show"

¶9. (C) Alor said that he had declined to accompany President Bashir on his recent trip to Darfur, where he held a Council of Ministers meeting on July 22, both because his father-in-law was ill and because he did not want to "go to Darfur for a show" of NCP policies with which he disagreed (Ref. B). This was partially in response to NCP public criticism that the SPLM was "flailing around on Darfur." He had voiced his reservations to Minister of Presidential Affairs Bakri Hassan Salih, who had said that he would tell Bashir only that Alor could not attend because of his father-in-law's illness.

NCP's "Dangerous Game"

¶10. (C) CDA Fernandez said that the NCP was playing a "high stakes, reckless game" with the international community by not dealing constructively with the issues confronting the North/South peace and Darfur. Alor said that Nafie and his allies were the "real problem" in the government. Nafie had admitted to Alor that he would rather destroy the country than leave power or hand over Sudan to "your foreign friends and our foreign enemies." Alor said that the SPLM was "closer to the National Congress than any other political party," was partners with the NCP in the peace agreement, and wanted to cooperate on issues facing Sudan. "But they want to do it their own way," explained Alor. "They want to challenge everybody." Bashir had even objected to Kiir's proposed re-shuffling of the SPLM ministers in the national government, opposing the replacement of Foreign Minister Lam Akol with SPLM loyalist Mansour Khalid. This is still another bit of unfinished business between the two uneasy

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partners in the Government of National Unity (GNU).

Action Request

¶11. (C) Embassy requests that the Department find a way to publicly mention "how closely we are following the resolution of the Abyei issue" (without passing judgment on the two parties) in any appropriate upcoming testimony or public comments of the Department's senior leadership. Such an innocuous comment, even in passing, would amplify our message delivered repeatedly locally that we care about the CPA that ended a bloody 50-year war with the South, just like we are deeply concerned and engaged on Darfur.
FERNANDEZ